

BOARDROOM CHATTER

PUBLICATION PREPARED BY ACPS PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mrs. Tammy Fraley, President
Mrs. Debra Frank, Vice President
Dr. Edward Root
Mr. Robert Farrell
Dr. David Bohn
Mr. Jeff Blank, Interim
Superintendent
Mr. Omaer Naeem, SMOB

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Recognize 2020 Student Salute Winners

The school board recognized the 2020 winners of the annual Student Salute program scholarships. Hana Chitsaz of Mountain Ridge High School will receive a \$5,000 one-year scholarship, to be used for tuition, to Frostburg State University for the 2020-2021 school year. Kole Morgan of Allegany High School and Katherine Baker of Mountain Ridge High School are the recipients of \$500 scholarships to FSU for the upcoming year.

The Allegany County Student Salute Program is a collaborative effort to recognize high school seniors who excel in the classroom. Through the program, those students identified as exceptional academic achievers, based on GPA, school and community leaders, and who intend to enroll at FSU, earn the opportunity to qualify for scholarships.

The school board distributes and collects the applications for the Student Salute scholarships, which are then converted into "on-air" salutes that run weekly on WCBC radio station. The Allegany County Chamber of Commerce's Education Committee reviews all applications and selects the FSU scholarship recipients.

Present Proclamation Recognizing May 1, 2020, as School Lunch Hero Day

The school board read a proclamation recognizing May 1, 2020, as School Lunch Hero Day. Nutritious meals at school are an essential part of the school day. The staff of the ACPS food service department are committed to providing healthful, nutritious meals to children, and the men and women who prepare and serve school meals help nurture them through their daily interactions and support.

Present Proclamation Recognizing May 4-8, 2020, as Teacher Appreciation Week

The school board read a proclamation recognizing May 4-8, 2020, as Teacher Appreciation Week. Teachers make public schools great, and they open children's minds to the magic of ideas, knowledge, and dreams. Teachers keep American democracy alive by laying the foundation for good citizenship, and they fill many roles as listeners, explorers, role models, motivators, and mentors. Teachers continue to influence us long after our school days are only memories.

INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATES

Dr. Kim Kalbaugh, ACPS Chief Academic Officer, provided the school board with several updates on the district's Continuity of Learning plan. A teacher survey was recently conducted, and the results of that survey were as follows:

- 472 teachers completed the survey (116 grades K-2; 131 grades 3-5; 123 grades 6-8; 109 grades 9-12; 47 other) It is important to note that when added, the numbers do not equal 472 as a number of teachers teach at various grade levels.
- Nearly 90% of the teachers completing the survey reported feeling confident or extremely confident about using Class Dojo or Google Classroom.
- Additional Professional Learning and support opportunities are being provided to ACPS educators on Class Dojo or Google Classroom, if requested.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for meeting held on April 28, 2020.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of April 1-30, 2020.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of April 1-30, 2020.
4. Receive monthly information technology report for the period of April 2020.
5. Receive monthly financial report for April 2020.

INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATES CONT.

- The ACPS goal is that 100% of our teachers feel confident or extremely confident about using the online platforms.

MSDE is providing all teachers with the opportunity to earn six (6) MSDE credits. In the ACPS, we are referring to this opportunity as the "Practicum for Online Learning". Dr. Brown, Dr. Kalbaugh, supervisors, and Ms. Kimberly Sloane, President of the Allegany County Education Association, collaborated to make sure this opportunity was fair and as objective as possible for our teachers. As of Friday, May 8, 2020, 43 ACPS teachers have taken advantage of the opportunity, and several other ACPS teachers have inquired about the opportunity.

A parent/guardian survey was recently conducted, and the results of that survey were as follows:

- 966 Responses
 - K-2 = 31.88%%
 - 3-5 = 26.19%
 - Middle = 20.39%
 - High = 20.39%
 - Other = 1.15%
- 30.33% Parents/Guardians identifying children at more than one school
- All per school data have been shared with school-based administrators

Alllegany County Public Schools is providing an Internet connection that is accessible from your vehicle in parking lots at schools. On Friday, May 8, 2020, ACPS began providing external WiFi access in different school locations throughout the county. Parents and students should monitor the ACPS crisis management website periodically for these school locations. Users are asked to use the network called "ACPS-ENT" to connect. USER ID is "hotspot" and the PASSWORD is "acps". The parking lot WiFi capability enables you to access the Internet easily. This WiFi is intended for use by ACPS staff, students, and parents for instructional purposes. All ACPS WiFi traffic is logged and filtered for CIPA compliance. Additionally, all exterior areas of the school campus are subject to video recording. The public should remain in their vehicles at all times adhering to social distancing mandates as set forth by Governor Hogan.

ACPS has continued with the distribution of Chromebooks. Based upon parent requests to the school principals, 225 Chromebooks have been distributed to high school students and 280 Chromebooks have been distributed to middle school students. Distribution of Chromebooks at the elementary level began on May 11th with grade 5 to those parents who requested the technology. Distribution will continue at the elementary level until technology requests are handled. ACPS plans to use CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) funding to purchase educational technology needed to provide educational interaction and support between students and their classroom teachers.

Online learning materials for May 4th-15th and through the end of the school year may contain new learning in some of the content areas, and the learning packets will also have new learning in some of the content areas to match the online learning. This new learning is allowed per the MSDE if it addresses the Continuity of Learning directions, which were identified to be the most critical standards students need to have in preparation for their next course in a sequence. Supervisors are working with their content teams to determine how this new learning will be accomplished. They have been given some flexibility in the number of pages allowed and they are working with their teachers on providing clear instructions for parents/students, as well as guided instruction to the extent possible. If a parent/student has a specific content area question or needs assistance, he/she should contact the teacher during a scheduled office hour or via email. A parent/student may also choose to contact a content supervisor via email for any questions or clarification needed.

Principals and teachers received the grading information for the 4th marking period and the grading window timeline for seniors. Seniors will conclude the continuity of learning via the online platform or learning packets on Friday, May 15, 2020. Online assignments are due before midnight on Sunday, May 17, 2020. Parents/SENIORS are encouraged to photograph the weekly graded assignments from the learning packets and send the photographs to the teacher or principal via email. Please make sure that the student's name and school are visible in the photographs. A parent/SENIOR who is unable to photograph the weekly graded assignments via the learning packets should contact the school principal about a process to have the completed assignments scanned

INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATES CONT.

or photographed at the school. Senior grades for the 4th marking period are due next week. Semester/Final grades will be calculated. Principals will be contacting seniors regarding pick up for yearbooks, obligations, report cards, and other senior information.

Some districts selected to use a Pass-Fail (P-) or Pass-Incomplete (P-I) option. The ACPS is electing to award grades for Grades 3-12. The performance key and learning behaviors key will be used for Grades K-2 as standard practice. Please keep in mind that students had grades for three nine weeks for year-long courses. Grades provide a clearer indication of a student's performance level. Grades also allow the GPA to be calculated. Colleges typically want to see a student's GPA or review grades. Students who are enrolled in advanced courses such as Honors, AP, and early college will still earn the weighted grades/credits as normal. In some cases it may be necessary to award an incomplete (I) to a student in grades K-11 in the short term if the student DOES NOT participate in any form of online learning or pick up a learning packet. However, students will be given the opportunity to complete the work if they are given an Incomplete. ACPS will release final grade reporting information and timelines for Grades K-11 once the MSDE approves the COL plan. Parents/students are encouraged to photograph the weekly graded assignments from the learning packets and send the photographs to the teacher or principal via email. Please make sure that the student's name and school are visible in the photographs. A parent/student who is unable to photograph the weekly graded assignments via the learning packets should contact the school principal about a process to have the completed assignments scanned or photographed at the school.

NEW BUSINESS

Vote to Meet in Executive Session June 9, 2020, as Necessary

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, pending any appeals or unfinished business. All meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice. The public may watch the livestream of the meeting at <http://bit.ly/ACPSMedia>. Community members may submit public comment via email to comments@acpsmd.org. Emails must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, June 8, 2020. During the public comment portion of the meeting, emails will be read in the order in which they were received. Personal information will not be withheld and anonymous submissions will not be considered. The Board President or her designee will read the constituent's name in addition to the public comment.

CONSTITUENTS' COMMENTS

Dave Phillips, Parent

Mr. Phillips submitted a letter regarding his child, who is a senior graduating from Allegany High School this year. His question for school board members was if there were any plans being made to provide graduates with a traditional graduation ceremony later this summer. He noted that he understands the need for a temporary solution such as the virtual/drive thru ceremony and applauds that effort but doesn't think that it is sufficient. Mr. Phillips noted that Greenway Avenue Stadium has a large seating capacity that could easily accommodate graduation ceremonies for each high school while still allowing for the appropriate social distancing guidelines to be adhered to.

Dr. Brian "Beaner" McKinley, ACPS Teacher

Dr. McKinley noted that just because school buildings closed on March 13th his job as an educator did not stop. He teaches AP calculus at Fort Hill, which he said was a never-ending job until his students take the exam. He has continued to answer questions, assign work, and help his students prepare for the AP exam all while also teaching dual enrollment statistics and college level algebra. Dr. McKinley said that there has been no pause in the classroom work, grading assignment, and answering questions. With that said, Dr. McKinley asked the school board to waive the five professional development days as a result of COVID-19.

SPECIAL REPORTS AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Tammy Fraley

Mrs. Fraley gave an update on the school board's search for a permanent superintendent. The search began in March 2020 for a permanent superintendent to assume the position effective July 1, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the school board has suspended the search at this time. They are very aware of the importance of this position and want to be sure that they evaluate all of their options moving forward. An update will be provided to the public as soon as possible.

Mrs. Fraley also thanked Dr. Kim Kalbaugh and staff for all of their hard work implementing the Continuity of Learning plan for ACPS. Mrs. Fraley also thanked Mr. Jeff Blank for his innovative approach to creating a plan for the graduating Class of 2020 to be recognized. Information on graduation plans and procedures can be found in detail on the school system's website. Finally, Mrs. Fraley thanked her colleagues and the community for their willingness to conduct and participate in virtual meetings.

Dr. Edward Root

Dr. Root extended his thanks and appreciation to administrators, teachers, staff, parents and students for working together to help make the system's continuity of learning plan as effective as it has been under very difficult circumstances.

Mrs. Deb Frank

Mrs. Frank also extended her thanks to ACPS administrators and staff for their hard work in keeping students engaged during the school closure. She especially noted the hard work of the food service and maintenance department during this difficult and unprecedented time. Mrs. Frank also thanked Mr. Blank for his innovative approach to graduation and feels that students and parents will be pleased with the results. In addition, Mrs. Frank noted that the school board has had several requests to waive days and that these decisions will come from the state superintendent in the near future. Finally, Mrs. Frank took the opportunity to recognize a community member by the name of Mark Kerns who has purchased equipment and supplies to provide 1,300 yard signs for all graduates in the Class of 2020 as a way to recognize and honor them.

Dr. David Bohn

Dr. Bohn echoed the sentiments of all of the other school board members and also extended his appreciation for the hard work that Mr. Blank has put into creating a way for the Class of 2020 to be recognized. He also thanked the entire ACPS team, from top to bottom, for their hard work during this difficult time and especially thanked the students for their engagement and effort with the continuity of learning plan.